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Issue 20 | July 2008

360zine

Free Magazine For Xbox 360 Gamers. Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...

MASSIVE REVIEW

THE BOURNE CONSPIRACY

PLUS...

ALONE IN THE DARK

Massive review

REVIEWED

NINJA GAIDEN II

LATEST NEWS

FAR CRY 2

AXES AT THE READY...

GUITAR HERO: AEROSMITH

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW!

LEGO: INDIANA JONES



NAVIGATE ➔

|02

Welcome to 360Zine



As we enter the summer months you'd expect games to start drying up as people dare to leave the comfort of their consoles for the great outdoors. But with the 360 in rude health titles keep on coming thick and fast. With full reviews of The Bourne Conspiracy, Guitar Hero: Aerosmith, Alone in the Dark and Ninja Gaiden II, this issue sees four very different contenders vying for your cash, so you can be sure there's something for everyone.

Looking further ahead, and on the back of Ubisoft's recent hands-on press event, we have previews of the epic looking Far Cry 2, Tom Clancy's EndWar, Tom Clancy's Hawx and Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway.

Enjoy the issue...

**360Zine
FEEDBACK!**
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tell us what
you think of
the new issue.

Dan Hutchinson, Editor
360zine@gamerzines.com



**Chris
Schilling**
Bourne again



Steve Hill
All alone in Central Park



Ian Morris
Hanging out in the arcade

MEET THE TEAM

Probably the best games writers on the planet

Don't miss! This month's top highlights



The Bourne Conspiracy



Guitar Hero: Aerosmith



Ninja Gaiden II



Alone In The Dark



Far Cry 2

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

- Infinite Undiscovery
- Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway
- Far Cry 2
- Prince Of Persia
- Velvet Assassin
- Rock Revolution
- Star Ocean: The Last Hope
- Alone In The Dark
- Ninja Gaiden II
- XBLA

Shaun White
Snowboarding

Lego: Indiana Jones
The Bourne

Conspiracy

Guitar Hero:
Aerosmith

Alone In The Dark

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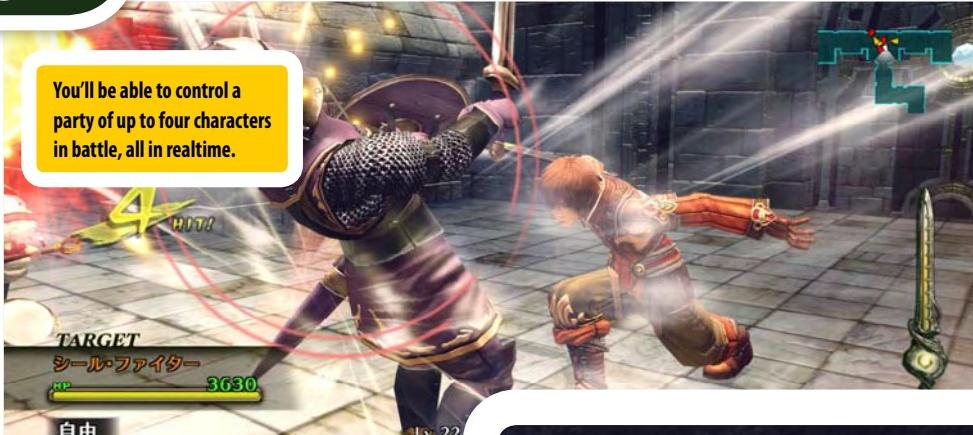




Previews



Publisher: Square-Enix
 Developer: Tri-Ace
 Heritage: Star Ocean series, Valkyrie Profile series
 Link: www.infiniteundiscovery.com
 ETA: Sept 5th



You'll be able to control a party of up to four characters in battle, all in realtime.



Tri-Ace has promised to mix things up a bit during combat.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
[Click here to tell us what you think of Infinite Undiscovery](#)



せんなごとの為に

Lost Odyssey wasn't a bad-looking game, but this is a cut above – arguably the first role-player to really make the most of the visual capabilities of the 360.

"This game comes from Tri-Ace, the developer behind PS2 RPG Star Ocean"

FIRST LOOK

Infinite Undiscovery

The new king of RPGs on 360?

What's the story?

With the world under the control of a fearsome army named the Order of Chains, an unlikely hero, Capell, emerges, to end the tyranny. Or does he? In fact, Capell is captured after a case of mistaken identity, before being rescued by a young girl, Aya. She is joined by Sigmund, the true hero. Upon meeting Sigmund the reason for the mistake is clear – Capell looks identical. Could they – gasp – be related? Who knows, but the wise money would bet that they might be...

What do we know?

Reluctant hero saves the world? It's clear we're in jRPG territory again, this time thanks to genre master Square-Enix, with Infinite Undiscovery apparently the first in a series of role-players to hit Microsoft's console over the next few years. The main reason to be excited about this game is that it comes from Tri-Ace, the developer behind ace PS2 RPG Star Ocean. It'll have to go some to top Mistwalker's tremendous Lost Odyssey, but then this looks a little less slavishly traditional than that title, and sports some absolutely lush visuals, with the soundtrack being provided by celebrated composer Motoi Sakuraba.

When do we get more?

We're lucky enough to be getting a near-simultaneous worldwide release on this one – highly unusual for the genre. 5th September is the date RPG fans will be hurriedly scribbling in their diaries.

Anything else to declare?

Unusually, you'll be doing your scrapping on the fly – with battles taking place on the main gameplay environment in seamless real-time. Ace.

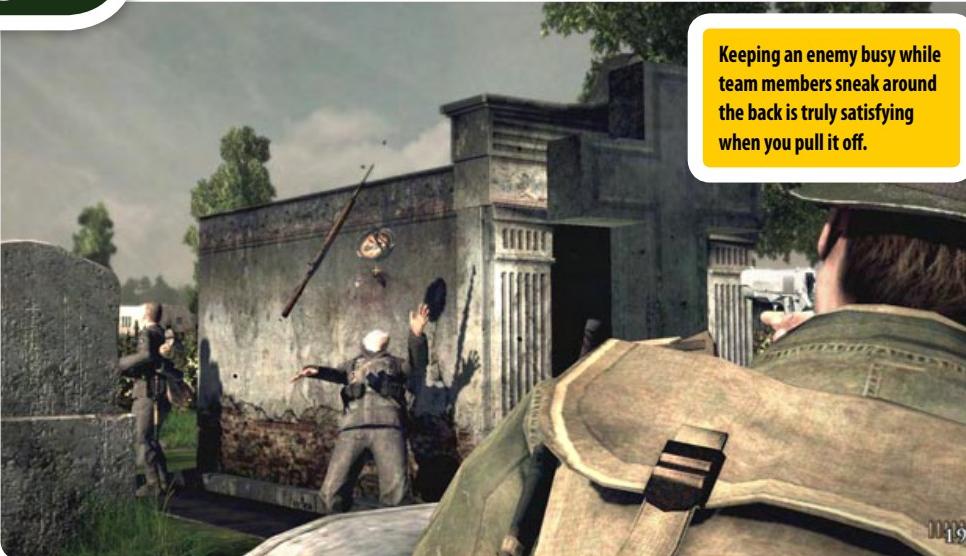


Previews

BROTHERS
IN ARMS
HELL'S HIGHWAY

Publisher: Ubisoft
 Developer: Gearbox Software
 Heritage: Brothers in Arms series, Halo: Combat Evolved
 Link: www.hellshighway.game.com
 ETA: August

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
[Click here to tell us what you think of Brothers in Arms: Hell's Highway](#)



It's often best to stay behind cover while you order your men to take riskier routes through the stages.

Brothers in Arms has always featured story sequences to provide human drama.

FIRST LOOK

Brothers in Arms: Hell's Highway

On the road to destruction

What's the story?

Based on Operation Market Garden, the largest paratrooper operation of the Second World War, Brothers in Arms: Hell's Highway brings the series' tactical squad-based shooting kicking and screaming into the current generation. Gearbox President Randy Pitchford claims that the revamped Unreal 3 engine the game uses means that it has 15-20% higher fidelity than Gears of War. Whatever that means.

What do we know?

From our time with the game, we're not entirely sure if that claim is accurate. Certainly, while the game looked highly impressive in places, it wasn't as spectacular-looking as the above statement might suggest. Here's hoping that the bullets trailing from your weapon don't appear quite as lightweight in the final game as the flyaway animation suggested in the build we played. Hell's Highway allows for both tactical and run-and-gun approaches – if you're clever enough with your squad commands, you might be able to get through a level without firing a shot, though it's always great to get your men to hold a position while you flank an unsuspecting opponent. Cinematic cutaways show your 'best' shots, with legs and arms being blown off fairly frequently. Not sure how respectful that is, but we suppose it's an unflinching representation of the horrors of war.

When do we get more?

It's out in August, although we wouldn't bet against a demo arriving before the game's release.

Anything else to declare?

If you play through the game in order then there will be no loading screens after the initial load. It's all completely seamless.



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PLAYBACK OPTIONS:



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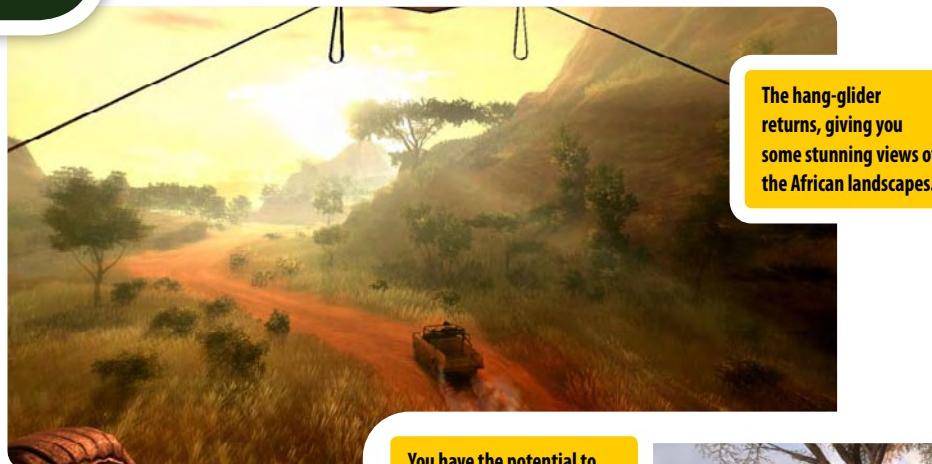




Previews

FARCRY2

Publisher: Ubisoft
 Developer: Ubisoft Montreal
 Heritage: Prince of Persia:
 Warrior Within
[Link:](http://farcry.us.ubi.com/index.php?page=home) <http://farcry.us.ubi.com/index.php?page=home>
 ETA: Q4 2008



The hang-glider returns, giving you some stunning views of the African landscapes.



Sadly, you can't steer and shoot at the same time – meaning we had to stop the boat for a spot of zebra slaying.

You have the potential to create absolute havoc with the fire in the game – from trapping enemies to causing enormous explosions.



PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you think of Far Cry 2



FIRST LOOK

Far Cry 2

Hands on with the African-set shooter

What's the story?

At Ubisoft's recent Ubidays event in Paris, we spent some time getting to grips with its gorgeous new FPS. The build we saw was looking extremely impressive; the huge environment gorgeously lit and generated completely seamlessly. It's spread over an area of a whopping 50 square kilometres, and we were told the game could potentially take fifty hours to complete if you spend a bit of time exploring.

What do we know?

While the 360 version we played wasn't quite up to the standard of the jaw-dropping PC demo running on a nearby rig, it's still one hell of a looker. We took a couple of small enemy settlements by storm with a hired companion, who was certainly more intelligent than the cannon-fodder opponents – though we were assured that their behaviour would be more effective on the higher difficulties. We spent some time driving a jeep and then a steerboat (complete with onboard machine gun, which we used to blast a pair of zebras we passed) and marvelled at the impressive fire tech

– a wayward grenade from an enemy managed to set his entire camp alight, allowing us to stroll in and pick off the few remaining survivors.

When do we get more?

It's still on for a fourth-quarter release this year and it seems at an advanced enough stage not to slip further.

Anything else to declare?

Ubisoft Montreal went to Africa to get a feel for the setting they were recreating – and came back with 2 gigabytes of images and videos to help them.



Previews

INCOMING

A fistful of top new titles coming to 360...

Prince Of Persia

Publisher: Ubisoft | ETA: Q3 2008

Though it wasn't playable at Ubisdays, the reinvented Prince of Persia was still a talking point, not least for its stunning cel-shaded looks. Joining the new prince is sidekick Elika, who will apparently be a uniquely co-operative AI partner – one who is key to pulling off special attacks.



Velvet Assassin

Publisher: Gamecock | ETA: Autumn

Making a refreshing change from your average take on World War II, this stealth-action title is inspired by the story of Violette Szabo, celebrated British secret agent. Featuring some stunning realtime lighting and surreal visuals, this has the potential to be the 360's answer to Metal Gear Solid 4.



Rock Revolution

Publisher: Konami | ETA: Autumn

With Guitar Hero and Rock Band ruling the rhythm-action roost, it's easy to forget pioneering titles like Konami's Guitar Freaks and Drum Mania. The publisher's roots prove it certainly knows its stuff when it comes to music, and with a realistic drum controller providing seven pads and cymbals to thwack, Rock Revolution could well be the genre king for the hardcore.



Star Ocean: The Last Hope

Publisher: Square-Enix | ETA: 2009

It's quite a way off yet, but after Infinite Discovery, Tri-Ace is returning to its best-loved franchise, with the fourth in the Star Ocean series. The game's events are set before the original SNES title, while this iteration will have a greater focus on sci-fi elements, with ship travelling playing a more important part.



Shaun White Snowboarding

Publisher: Ubisoft | ETA: TBC 2008

He's won an Olympic gold and eight gold medals at the X-Games, so it's high time Shaun White got his own videogame. Produced in collaboration with the man himself in an attempt to capture the excitement and atmosphere of the sport, and utilising the Assassin's Creed engine, this certainly looks the part.

Last Remnant

Publisher: Square-Enix | ETA: Q4 2008

The second of Square-Enix's triumvirate of role-players, Last Remnant's trump card is its combat system, which allows up to 70 units to battle it out at once. The Unreal Engine 3-powered RPG will have no random encounters, and its scraps will contain Quick-Time Events, making for a more action-based focus than your average RPG.

UPCOMING

AUGUST

- Soul Calibur IV – 1st August
- Madden NFL 2009 – 15th August

SEPTEMBER

- Midnight Club: Los Angeles – 12th September
- Star Wars: The Force Unleashed – 19th September

AUTUMN

- Dead Space – 31st October
- 50 Cent: Blood on the Sand – Autumn

WINTER

- Borderlands – Christmas
- Call of Duty: World at War – Christmas



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GAMESPY - 4/5

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HIGHMOON STUDIOS

PLAYSTATION 3

XBOX 360

CONTROL ➔





Previews



Publisher: Ubisoft
 Developer: Ubisoft Romania
 Heritage: Blazing Angels
 1 & 2
 Link: www.hawx-game.com
 ETA: Autumn 2008

HANDS ON

Tom Clancy's HAWX

Fly into the danger zone...

There haven't been too many games recently that have attempted to recreate the high-stakes tension and fast-paced acrobatics of airborne dogfights, fewer still that have been any good. Namco's Ace Combat 6 is easily the best of its kind on Xbox 360, but now there's a very strong challenger to its crown in the form of Tom Clancy's HAWX, a game that looks impressive and also seems to play well, too.

The most noticeable difference when starting the game is in the ground detail. Tasked with guarding Rio de Janeiro from an enemy air raid, you'll really feel like you're swooping down



There's nothing quite like circling behind an opponent and unleashing a pair of missiles into his craft.

over a genuine city, packing in as much detail as the excellent plane models. What's even more remarkable is how smoothly it all moves – quite something considering you've also got white trails spiralling through the busy skies, with explosions showering particles and missiles fizzing towards their targets at a frantic rate.

It's this latter element that provokes some of the most exciting moments – you're given a high-pitched (and actually slightly irritating) alert, and you can zoom the camera out to get a better view of the projectile chasing you. This allows you a better chance of escape by diving and swerving your plane away from the missile – accomplished quite easily by a control scheme that eschews complexity for a more arcade-like feel that works really well. Beginners or less-able players can also benefit from computer-assisted targeting, which sets a series of chevrons to pilot your craft



"Tasked with guarding Rio de Janeiro from an air raid, you'll really feel like you're swooping down over a genuine city"





Previews



> Tom Clancy's HAWX cont.

through, in order to get the best angle of attack. One section of the level we played saw us plunging towards the city itself to fire upon a tank which had taken up residence on the streets of



The game is set in the same universe as the Ghost Recon titles, with that series' Scott Mitchell involved in asking for air support.

Rio. And when you're close enough to an airborne foe, you can target them automatically – as long as you stay within range and are facing roughly the right direction, your heatseekers will do their job more often than not. Hardcore players needn't fret, however – all these assists can be turned off for a more realistic experience. That's not to say it's easy, even with these options turned on – you'll be attacked by several opponents within a fairly short space of time, with missiles frequently locking onto your position. Some give you very little time to escape. And if you're turning at awkward angles, it's all too easy to lapse into a stall, sending your plane plummeting earthward.

As for multiplayer options, Ubisoft's Thomas Simon confirmed that there would definitely be co-operative and competitive multiplayer elements in the finished game. Though we didn't



We're not sure HAWX ever looked quite this pretty on our playtest, though it gives an idea of the level of background detail you can expect.

get the opportunity to test it out, we're certain the co-operative option in the campaign mode will be a popular one. The game will also support up to 16 players online, competing to earn valuable cash and experience to unlock new weapons for your plane.

While HAWX looks excellent and plays well, it could potentially get a little repetitive should the game fail to mix up the missions enough. As long as fresh elements are brought in fairly regularly (and we suspect that they will be), then the gameplay should wind up

as polished as the extremely impressive visuals. With a few more months development time to get everything working perfectly, HAWX is certainly on the right flightpath. ●

**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to
tell us what
you think of
Tom Clancy's
HAWX

360Zine

HOW COMPLETE?

75%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

85%

Potentially the Top Gun of flight sims on 360



Previews



Publisher: Ubisoft
 Developer: Ubisoft Shanghai
 Heritage: Splinter Cell, GRAW
[Link: http://endwargame.us.ubi.com](http://endwargame.us.ubi.com)
 ETA: Q4 2008

HANDS ON

Tom Clancy's EndWar

The Halo of RTS titles?

Apparently "There's no magic in the game", we're told as we start playing EndWar for the first time. Every unit on the battlefield has to be dropped in and deployed. While it might be a war of the future, there are no magically respawning soldiers, no tanks appearing out of thin air. Yet that's not to say that there's not a bit of wizardry involved in its USP – the voice commands that are used to multitask

"The voice commands work more efficiently than in any other strategy game we've played"

work far more efficiently than in any other strategy game we've seen.

That's no exaggeration either – the game manages to recognise a wide range of accents for its amazing array of commands. Even our broad North-West tones were accurately read by the software – though that might have something to do with having to make sure Ubis' host Vernon Kay was catered for. The only prerequisite is that you enunciate confidently – stumble over your words and the game may misread your intentions. Think of yourself as a bold military commander, and you shouldn't have any problems. Though that might be difficult when the battle gets intense – at least you'll have the opportunity to correct yourself easily, with the commands



Various major cities are the background for many of the skirmishes – Paris, Washington and Moscow are among those featured.

appearing as text on the screen as they're spoken, so you'll always know if and when you've gone wrong.

While the commands aren't particularly simplistic – "unit three move to target", "deploy artillery" rather than "go here, go there" – they're all intuitive once you get into the game's militaristic mindset. And you don't even have to learn the lingo if you don't want to – all commands can be accessed from a menu, though you'll arguably be missing out on one of the greatest advantages such a system provides – the ability to control areas of the battlefield you can't even see. The view you get is fairly close to the action, so often it's best to use a voice command to set units out of range without needing to scroll across the map (or abandon your current unit, particularly if they're in a tight spot). >



The different factions have their own strengths and weaknesses.



The main online mode takes the form of a sort of MMORTS.



Previews

Tom Clancy's
ENDWAR

The game features seven different unit types – ranging from engineers and riflemen to gunships and artillery.

> Tom Clancy's EndWar cont.

Seeing infantry march into position to help out is a genuine thrill when you've merely instructed them with your own voice while watching the action. "Get the basic move and attack stuff down and you're good to go", we're informed. And that's an accurate description.



Each unit type can be levelled up, RPG-style, and you can also customise its look and even its abilities.

As for the tactical warfare itself, it's simpler than you might think – that's not to say that there aren't enough complexities, but merely that it's been streamlined to make it more accessible to newcomers. There's a very simple rock-paper-scissors combat chain – tanks beat transports beat gunships beat tanks – which allows you to



Endwar is a relatively cinematic-looking example of the genre, with the camera allowing you to view the carnage in close-up.

instantly know which unit you're best summoning in any given situation.

Aside from annihilating enemy units, the main objective in each stage is to capture as many uplink facilities as possible – allowing you to summon more allies, while also letting you upgrade to (for example) increase your air support. Boost your facilities and you'll be able to access nukes – the US troops get a WMD, while European armies have a powerful laser which can cut through enemy ranks like a hot knife through butter.

Our time with EndWar leaves us in absolutely no doubt that the question asked by our strapline is a distinct

possibility. If the game's missions make the most of its superb mechanics then we could well be looking at a strategy classic in the making here. ●



Your units are controlled as a group, with no way to select individual members.

360Zine

Tom Clancy's
ENDWAR

HOW COMPLETE?

75%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

88%

It's the end of the world as we know it – and it feels fine



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MINIATURE HERO

As well as packing them in at the cinemas, Indy's been dazzling gamers the world over – this time in LEGO form. With LEGO Indiana Jones topping the charts, we spoke to executive producer **Shawn Storc** to get the lowdown on creating a genuine blockbuster



With more frames of animation than the LEGO Star Wars characters, Traveller's Tales really captured the spirit of Indiana Jones.



Many famous moments from the original trilogy are recreated in the game.

Though they appeal to a wide audience, the LEGO Star Wars games are generally geared towards younger players. How have you managed to communicate the appeal of Indy to kids who might not be as aware of the character as they are with the Star Wars universe?

Our primary goal from the start of designing and creating LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures has been to provide an exciting action experience that just happens to also be based in the Indiana Jones world. In that respect, when viewed by those not familiar with Indy, response has

been just as positive as those who have seen the films.

What are the main challenges of developing a game that has to appeal to both children and adults – particularly in Indy's case, as the audience will naturally skew a little older?

The main challenge is finding the right balance of humour and action, a formula which the team has been able to achieve with great success in the past. This is the only game that relives the three original stories and we wanted to make sure the players will personally be Indy in the tongue-in-cheek world of LEGO, which fans

"The main challenge was finding the right balance of humour and action"



The developer took the opportunity to lampoon the most memorable film sequences in cutscene form.



There's a great use of co-operative play, as you'll often need your sidekick to get past certain situations.

"The team has the wonderful ability to make the characters physically expressive"

> Interview continued

of any age can relate to and have an enormous amount of fun with.

Are you at all concerned that many of the game's jokes won't be understood by those who haven't seen any of the films?

Not at all! The team at Traveller's Tales has the wonderful ability to make the characters physically expressive and tell the story without the need for actual dialogue. It really doesn't matter if you are familiar with the Indiana Jones stories or not, there are plenty of jokes for everyone to enjoy!

LEGO Indiana Jones takes a slower, more thoughtful approach than LEGO Star Wars. Can you tell us the reasoning behind that?

I wouldn't tend to agree with you on this point, as I think that we are doing our best to use the films as inspiration for the pacing of the game, with the goal of keeping the player immersed in the story and action, and always wanting to keep on play for 'just five more minutes'.

LEGO Indiana Jones captures the spirit of the films considerably better than any previous Indy games, all of which had a more realistic feel - why do you think that this is?

I believe it is due to the LEGO treatment allowing for an even greater suspension of disbelief, which is purely down to the fact that the visuals and gameplay are

so unique and totally endearing. Since this is the only Indiana Jones game where players can play through all of Indy's original adventures from the movies, players will inherently relate directly to the films and be able to relive all of their favourite adventures from all three of the great movies.

Is there anything you'd like to have included that either LucasArts or LEGO wouldn't allow?

Not at all. There are so many options offered by the Indiana Jones stories that we had to continually remind ourselves to stay focused and not overwhelm ourselves or the player with too much content.

Can you tell us any personal favourite moments from the game? What one aspect are you most proud of?

That's a really tough question to answer, as there are so many exciting moments from the movies that have translated very faithfully to the LEGO world. If I had to choose a specific gameplay moment, it would have to be Indy's Trials from the Last Crusade. There are a ton of fun and interesting puzzles one after the other as Indy gets closer and closer to the Holy Grail.

The one aspect of the game I'm most proud of is the how the team has been working so well together to create the first ever LEGO-themed Indiana Jones experience, and how they've made this process an exciting one for everyone involved. ●



Publisher: Activision

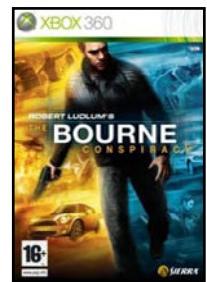
Developer: Traveller's Tales

Heritage: LEGO Star Wars,

The Chronicles of Narnia

Link: www.lucasarts.com/games/legoindianajones

OUT NOW



Publisher: Sierra

Developer: High Moon Studios

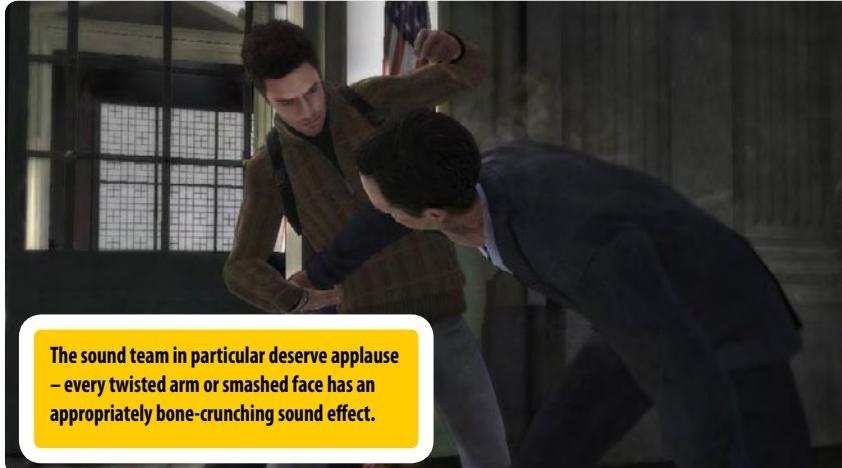
Heritage: Darkwatch

Link: www.bournethegame.com
OUT NOW

The Bourne Conspiracy

Could this be the start of a great new franchise?

Some games keep you playing because their gameplay is wonderfully addictive. Some keep you hooked by weaving a spellbinding narrative. And then there are others, whose appeal you can't quite put your finger on – they have an indefinable magic that glues the controller to your palms, providing that one-more-go allure to see you through to the end. The Bourne Conspiracy belongs in that latter category.

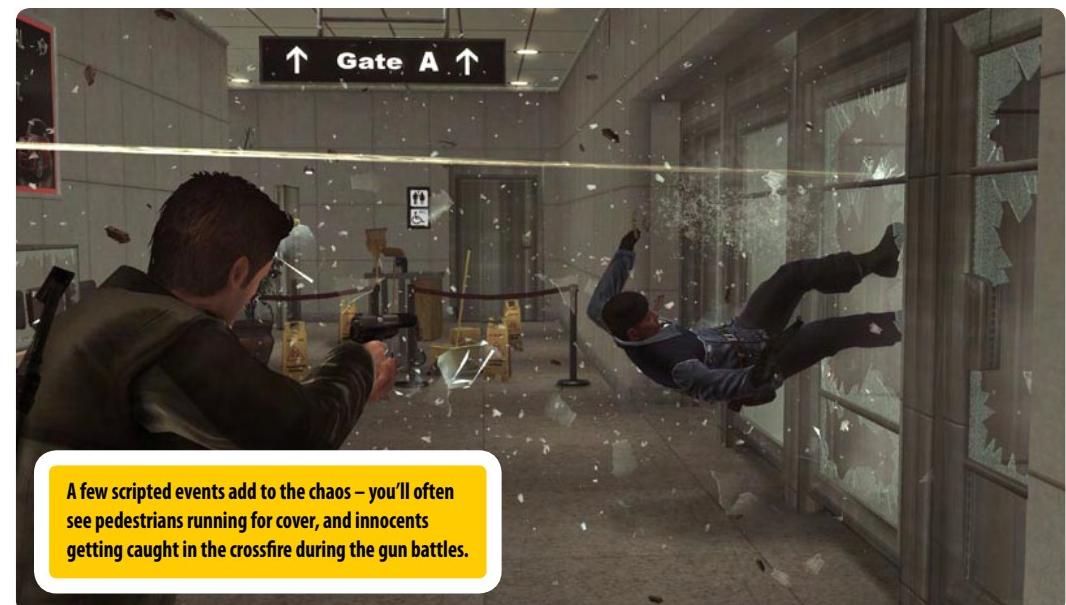


The sound team in particular deserve applause – every twisted arm or smashed face has an appropriately bone-crunching sound effect.

Though its glossy retelling of Jason Bourne's pre-identity past eschews the slower, more character-based moments in the movie trilogy, in dealing with a character most people will be familiar with, its story makes for a fascinating framework to the action. Essentially, it's showing not how Bourne became such an accomplished assassin, but showing the missions he took before losing his nerve during one hit and getting shot for his clemency. Rather than

"High Moon, the developer, mixes up the game's sections by turning them into flashback sequences"

introducing these sections in chronological order, developer High Moon mixes things up by turning them into flashback sequences which build up to the events in the first film, and then punctuate the levels thereafter, usually sparked by Bourne finding a particular item, often a passport.

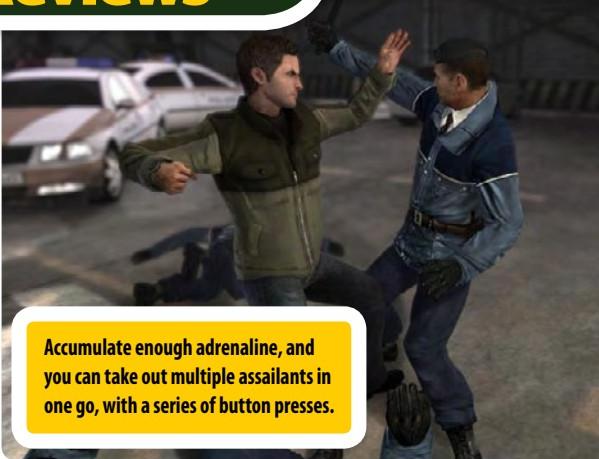


A few scripted events add to the chaos – you'll often see pedestrians running for cover, and innocents getting caught in the crossfire during the gun battles.



If you've got an automatic weapon or a shotgun, destroying your enemy's cover is often a good tactic.

Reviews



Accumulate enough adrenaline, and you can take out multiple assailants in one go, with a series of button presses.



The game's one racing section offers some unusual handling to say the least – the e-brake is almost ludicrously effective for cornering. Still, it's great fun.



> Bourne Conspiracy cont.

While in some respects you'll be keen to get back to the dramatic events of *The Bourne Identity* – particularly if you're a fan of the film, and a lot of people do seem to like it – these levels are just as interesting and dramatic, even if by the end they do start to get a tad on the repetitive side.

The game is essentially broken up into three distinct gameplay styles – although there's only one driving level, so for the most part you'll either be engaging in close-up hand-to-hand fights or more traditional third-person

shooting. For our money, the former make for the game's best moments, and there are several reasons for this. For starters, the action is incredibly cinematic – the camera is fixed upon the two combatants, tightly framing the pugilism as you attempt to pummel your enemy into submission.

The controls for the combat are kept very simple – X pulls off a quick, weaker attack, while Y executes a more powerful blow. A is used to block, and you can move around with the analogue stick. Despite the frequency

of the battles, there's a surprising amount of variety to stave off boredom. You can chain moves into a combo by alternating button presses, while if you possess enough adrenaline – gained through successful hits – you can pull off a 'takedown' with the B button. These are often context-sensitive – one famous moment involving a pen is recreated, while you can pick up fire extinguishers to club your opponent or slam their heads into sinks. What makes this so satisfying is partly the intelligent

"It's wince-inducingly brutal in places, and all the better for it"

behaviour of the enemies – who will dodge and parry attacks if you button mash – but mostly thanks to the bone-crunching sound effects, and the solidity of the character models and the surroundings. Every punch and kick really seems to connect, with >

FREEZE FRAME

Breaking the game down, one stage at a time...



30 MINUTES

Blasting propane tanks to distract a helicopter – the game gets off to an explosive start.



3 HOURS

Zurich Airport is the scene for a chase as Bourne tries to capture Turkish general Divandelen.



5 HOURS

Escaping the Embassy in Paris – a couple of timed sections here, and watch out for those snipers!



8 HOURS

The Mini chase is an entertaining aside, and a decent attempt at recreating Identity's best bit.



10 HOURS

With three assassins on his tail, it's time for Bourne to fight back instead of running.



Reviews



At various points you can tap A to nip behind cover. Enemies are plentiful so it's best not to be out in the open too often.



You can sneak up behind some enemies to pull off a stealth takedown – you get the reward of the brutal cutaway without the effort of a fist-fight beforehand.

FIGHT CLUB

How to brawl like Jason Bourne



Kick,
punch

It's all in
the mind

Knockout

Kick, punch

Jabbing away at the attack buttons isn't going to get you anywhere. Instead you need to time your attacks, and set up combos by chaining different commands. You can also pull off charged kicks by holding down either attack button – as long as they're not interrupted, they can't be blocked.

> Bourne Conspiracy cont.

enemies reeling from a powerful kick to the head, and flopping unconscious to the floor when they're slammed against a concrete post. It's wince-inducingly brutal in places, and all the better for it. And some of the more elaborate takedowns really do have to be seen to be believed.

Once Bourne has a gun in his hand, things are less successful. Though still remarkably solid, the shooting mechanics suffer from a few irritating niggles that prevent these potentially more explosive sequences from leaving quite the same mark as the fighting. The aiming is just a little too fiddly for its own good, with guns never seeming quite accurate enough in the hands of the otherwise reliable Bourne. Enemies take a few too many shots to go down, while multiple shots often don't register if the appropriate stunned animation hasn't finished. Though you can use Bourne's adrenaline to see the bad guys more easily, and to point him

in the direction of his nearest foe, this feels like a waste. Given that the adrenaline is also used for shooting takedowns – one-shot kills with an accompanying cutaway requiring a quick button-press in a short time limit – it seems unfair that often you have to use it to stand any chance of getting past multiple enemies.

Meanwhile, the one driving level is a little on the silly side – the handling is unrealistic and the car is incredibly resilient for the most part – but it's undeniably exciting in places and makes for a pleasant change from the constant fighting and shooting, which by the latter stages of the game is starting to get a little old.

Yet Bourne's repetition and minor quibbles don't affect the overall quality of the product, which is remarkably accomplished and extremely polished. It doesn't always work, and it's best experienced in small doses, but it captures the Bourne spirit very well

PULSOMETER Signs of life

Jukebox and book as weapons!

Dramatic ship scrap

Exciting finale



indeed, and frequently feels exciting and dramatic. With plenty of cinematic punch – a special mention must go to the brilliant music – this is one licensed title well worth getting. ●

360Zine Verdict

Bourne glee – a great tie-in that's worthy of a sequel.

- ➔ Solid graphics, sound and music
- ➔ Cinematic and thrilling
- ➔ Dodgy aiming, repetitive

83% ➔



Guitar Hero: Aerosmith

The GH train keeps a-rollin'

With Guitar Hero: Metallica on the way, this isn't quite the last we're going to hear from the regular series before it goes all Rock Band on us with the drum-and-vocal-enhanced Guitar Hero: On Tour later this year. Although Aerosmith certainly does suggest that the formula is starting to wear thin. It's a fascinating twist on the music genre – rhythm-action as biography, if you like – and it's an interesting document of one of rock's

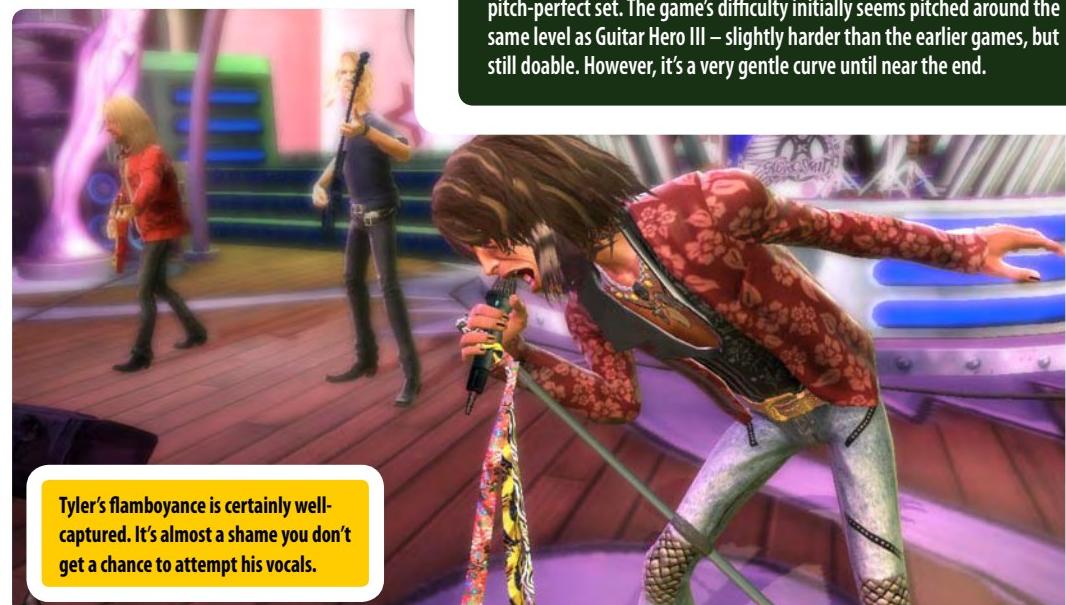
best-loved bands, capturing their rise to fame and superstardom from humble beginnings, and it's just about essential if you're a fan of the band. As a game, however, it's perhaps the least essential Guitar Hero to date.

Curiously, you're not really playing as Aerosmith themselves half the time – instead you're taking the role of a guitarist in a covers band support act, with the game's heroes only brought onto the stage once you've completed



"Guitar Hero: Aerosmith is essential if you're a fan of the band"

two songs as Javier Stone or Judy Nails or any of the previous games' axe-wielding protagonists. The covers were apparently chosen by members of the band, and they're a reasonable selection, ranging from Mott The Hoople's iconic All The Young Dudes (albeit not the original) to the Clash's Complete Control. Pass these, and the crowd will start chanting for Aerosmith, whereupon you'll be in



ROCKIN' ON BOBO

How to make it big with the band



Warm up



Knock 'em dead



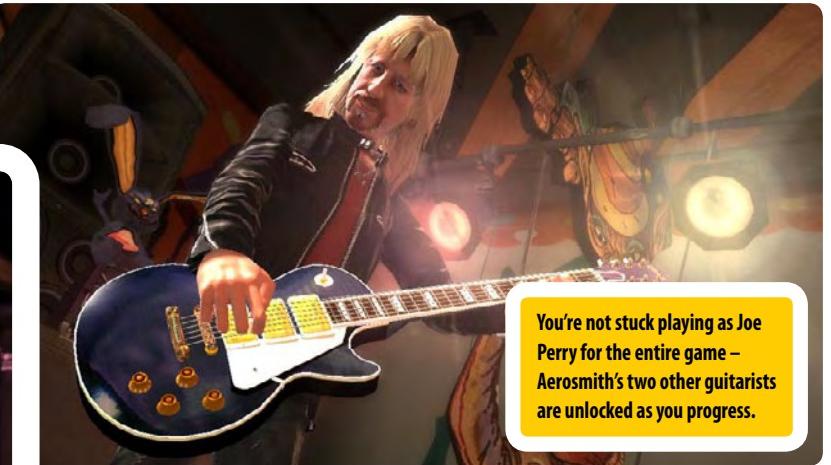
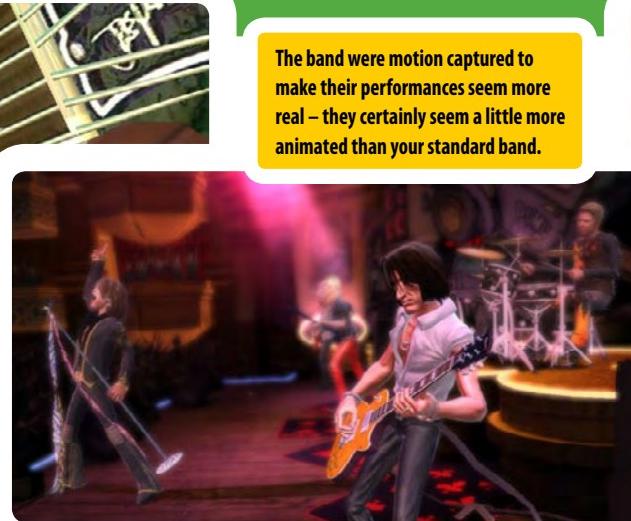
Half-time fun



Warm up

Get the crowd hyped up for their favourites by launching each gig with a pitch-perfect set. The game's difficulty initially seems pitched around the same level as Guitar Hero III – slightly harder than the earlier games, but still doable. However, it's a very gentle curve until near the end.

Reviews

> **Guitar Hero** continued

control of guitarist Joe Perry, usually playing one Seventies hit alongside a more recent tune – so Make It rubs shoulders with golden oldie Uncle Salty, and Toys In The Attic. Get through both and you'll be asked onstage for an encore – usually one of the band's most substantial smashes, like Love In An Elevator, or Walk This Way. And yes, you are joined by DMC from Run DMC for the latter (the rapper is even available as an unlockable character).

In other words, it's your standard

Guitar Hero formula, only with Aerosmith taking over half the time. Which is fine in one sense – if it ain't broke, why fix it? – but then it does show a lack of imagination, considering we're dealing with one of the most flamboyant bands in the world. And post Rock Band, the formula is starting to show the strain, exacerbated by the fact that Neversoft clearly don't quite have Harmonix's ear for amazingly intuitive note placement. Even on Medium you'll find a few extra notes where there aren't any in the real song.

And if you're a fan of the band's biggest stadium-rock moments – the tunes that brought them a significant career revival in the Nineties – you'll find a fair few shocking omissions.

**"It's your standard
Guitar Hero
formula, only with
Aerosmith taking
over half the time"**

There's no Crazy, no Cryin', no Don't Wanna Miss A Thing, and (scandalously) no Dude Looks Like A Lady. Presumably these weren't a great fit for the harder difficulty levels, or some licensing issues got in the way, but it's still a great shame that songs which most non-hardcore Aerosmith fans would lap up aren't featured in any way. If the latter isn't a problem, then surely they could have been included as single-difficulty unlockables? Oh, and while we're carping, why on earth did Neversoft see fit to include a horrible guitar battle near the end – one which, on every difficulty, is a gigantic spike up from

>

**FREEZE
FRAME**

Breaking the game down, one stage at a time...



30 MINUTES

Starting out small, and playing on stages that are little more than 'the size of a postage stamp'.



2 HOURS

Playing the hits now, and busting out some memorable riffs in the larger arenas.



4 HOURS

Time to take a break and unlock some new guitars and fresh tunes from the vault.



6 HOURS

Career mode's almost over, so what does the future hold for the band?



8 HOURS

Online options and harder difficulties add lasting value for serious fans.



PULSOMETER Signs of life

All The Young Dudes – better than Aerosmith!

Livin' and Love In – two classics

Interstellar rock gods



Livin' On The Edge or Sweet Emotion, following Aerosmith from Max's Kansas City to their induction into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall Of Fame, it's clearly too much for any fan of the band to resist. ●

> Guitar Hero continued

the reasonably well-moderated curve of the rest of the game? It's an irritant that could have been easily avoided.

At least the game's presentation does the job nicely – the recreations of Perry, Tyler et al are accurate, with a couple of animated interludes providing even better caricatures than the in-game models. And, as we've said, it's genuinely interesting to see the band's star on the rise, even if the more outrageous side of the group is glossed over. The interview snippets between each stage are brief enough to be worth watching, while the sound is terrific throughout, with even the cover versions impressing.

Guitar Hero: Aerosmith ultimately proves that it's very hard to make a bad Guitar Hero game, even if this is at turns lazy, and at others decidedly lacking (certainly in the songs omitted). That said, when you've got that guitar in your hand and you're playing epics like

360Zine Verdict

You won't be Cryin', but you won't go Crazy either.

Being Joe Perry is awesome

Lacklustre tracklisting

Dodgy note placement

80%



Publisher: Atari
Developer: Eden Studios
Heritage: Test Drive Unlimited, V-Rally 3
Link: www.centraldark.com
OUT NOW

Alone in the Dark

The world's most inconsistent game?

A lone in the Dark is a real curate's egg of a game, jumping from inspired to awful throughout. Reviewing it is difficult because at times it's a ninety percenter, and at others it'd struggle to get half that.

A case in point is an early race against time – driving a car onto the streets of New York to escape the humanoid enemies who've been possessed by an unearthly power, you find yourself outrunning what appears to be an earthquake that somehow seems to be chasing you. In fact, it's the same supernatural subterranean force, ripping up roads, slicing fissures in the sidewalk, tossing cars and reducing

buildings to rubble, raining down on you as you swerve and skid around the panicked city. It's a bravura sequence from a dramatic standpoint – with music, visuals and dramatic cinematography combining to create something genuinely exciting. Unfortunately, the twitchy car handling coupled with the slightly unfair collision mechanics (hitting a slightly raised piece of tarmac can bring you to a dead halt, while if you brush against an oncoming vehicle, you might as well prepare to restart) mean that the scripted event will invariably catch up with you more than a few times and you'll have to repeat the entire section



over and over again. It's a pity, as one part in particular – driving into a shopping mall, up the escalator and out of the window – is goosebump-inducingly thrilling.

That one mission isn't necessarily representative of the game as a whole, but it does emphasise how the brilliant Hollywood action and hugely atmospheric stages constantly bump up against the clunky gameplay mechanics. When you find yourself struggling to get your character to



Carnby can use his environment to his advantage – there are a couple of clever puzzles involving electricity cables...

YOU NEED HANDS

Messing around in coats



Burn baby, burn

Favourite combos

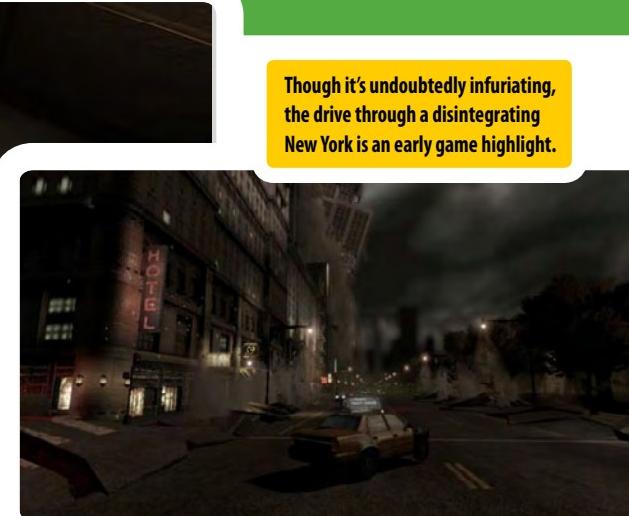
Skip to the end



Burn baby, burn

Explosive glass bottles and plastic bottles are your friends, though it's always best to leave one space in the right side of your coat for a first-aid spray. But then you can't combine that with double-sided tape, stick it to an enemy and then messily explode it when you shoot the bottle, can you?

Reviews



> Alone in the Dark cont.

run in a straight line, you know you've got problems. And then you'll find a moment of genuine innovation that makes you grin, only to then reach an epic fetch quest that kills the game's otherwise immaculate pacing stone dead. It's strange to say for a game that's been in development for four years, but it really could have done with an extra six months of polishing and tweaking to get things right. Perhaps Atari simply got fed up of waiting for Eden and decided not to spend any more money getting it perfect. Shame.

Of that time spent creating the game, reportedly Eden spent a long while getting its fire tech absolutely spot on – and the much-vaunted 'real world rules' certainly lead to some inventive puzzles, while the fire itself almost feels like another character in the game. It's used to burn down doorways, to immolate enemies, to create diversions and to shift large obstacles. Make a trail of flammable liquid and you can set light to the other end to detonate cars or other obstructions safely. While it's not

essential for the most part, you'll need fire to burn the game's monsters, most of whom will return if they're not toasted when they're down.

As with almost every element of Alone in the Dark however, this is hardly easy to accomplish. Say, for example, you want to create a molotov cocktail to deal with a nearby foe. You'll need to access your inventory, which involves protagonist Edward Carnby opening his jacket. Then you'll need to rummage through your pockets, using an awkward control scheme which

makes items difficult to access in a hurry. You'll then need to combine a bottle of flammable liquid with a bandage or handkerchief (both of which are even more tricky to access, as objects on the top-left side of your jacket require very delicate analogue input), then equip it, exit the menu and get ready to throw. Except by this stage your

"The developers spent a long time getting its fire tech absolutely spot on"

>

FREEZE FRAME

Breaking the game down, one stage at a time...



30 MINUTES
Holding on for dear life – for the first time of many. This is a great start to the game.



2 HOURS
A big change of pace for the underground sections – these bits are more horror than survival.



4 HOURS
Dramatic twists and shocks in the museum – and some seriously nasty enemies, too.



6 HOURS
The park holds the key to the story's secret. You'll definitely be spending plenty of time here.



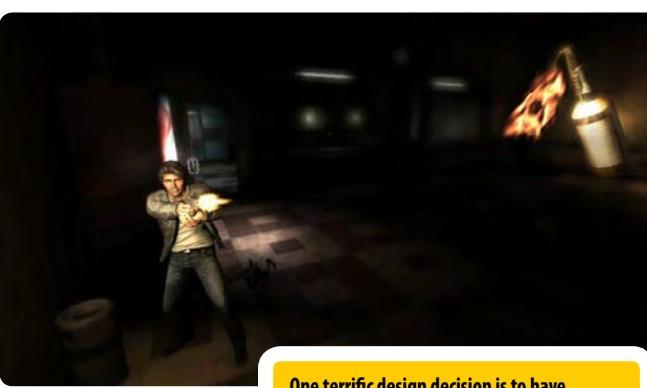
8 HOURS
One dragged-out section later, and you're ready to find out the final piece of the mystery.



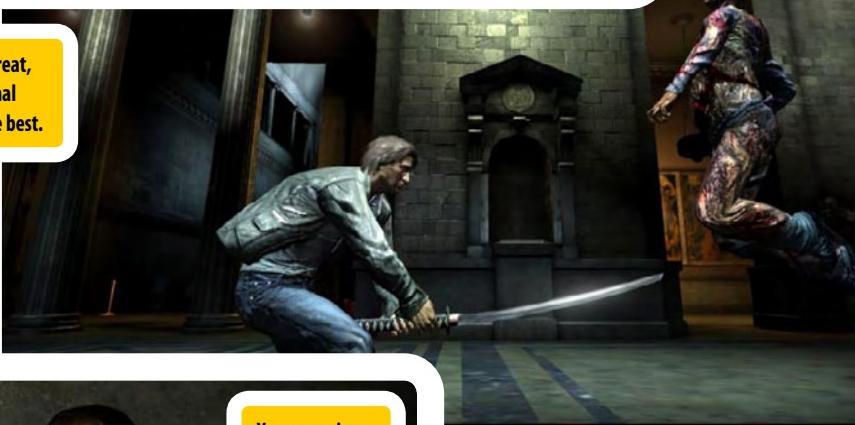
Reviews



Quite a tricky bit, this – you'll find yourself backing off from these critters, only to fall into the electrified water for instant death.



One terrific design decision is to have thrown weapons arcing through the air in slow motion, allowing you to blast explosive bottles to set enemies or vehicles alight.



Your enemies are fast, but not particularly intelligent.



The right analogue stick makes bashing enemies pleasingly physical, but it's also quite slow to execute and it's only a temporary measure.



Your enemies are fast, but not particularly intelligent.

> **Alone in the Dark cont.**

assailant is already slapping you about and you're far too close to set off an explosion that will almost certainly kill you. While this does lead to some frantic moments (by design? Hard to tell) it's also brutally unfair, especially when your enemies start getting tougher. You can access favourite item combinations using D-pad shortcuts, but that complicates the interface further – and the limited number of things you can carry means that you'll often fail to realise you're short on a particular item until it's too late.

And then you'll squirt mosquito spray into a line of flames to set alight an enemy standing behind and you'll be hooked once again. The story is compellingly told, and the DVD-style presentation (which, admittedly, does allow you to skip any bits you're stuck on) is marvellous. The 'previously on...' bits are almost worth the price of admission alone.

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*

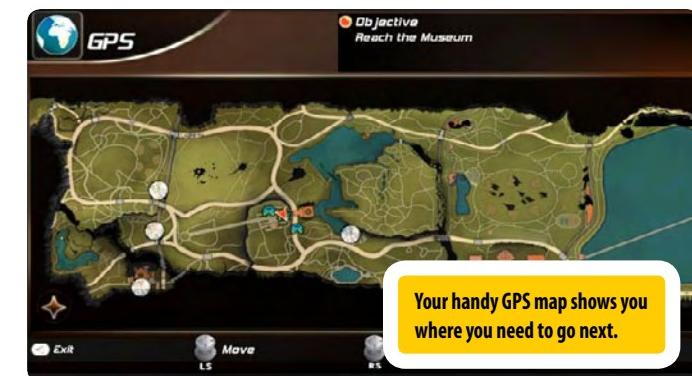
Inspired opening

Burning bosses

The root of the game's problems



Overall, *Alone in the Dark* is one of those games which goes on to inspire far superior titles. To catch a glimpse of gaming's future, it's worth a look. As long as you're prepared to be infuriated on occasion, that is... ●



Your handy GPS map shows you where you need to go next.

360Zine Verdict

A game missing a few parts – the sequel should be tremendous.

- Great atmosphere and innovative
- Terrific pacing and fine structure
- Glitchy and controls are terrible

79%



Ninja Gaiden II

Bloody brilliant, or bloody hell?

There are two things you should know about Ninja Gaiden II. Two key aspects of the game which are going to polarise opinion. The first, which is already widely known, is the difficulty. The original Ninja Gaiden was hard; this one is harder. There's an easier mode, named Path of the Acolyte, which – after the first few stages, anyway – feels almost as tough as its knuckle-gnawingly difficult predecessor.

Choose the standard default difficulty (i.e. the one which, upon completion, unlocks a further – even harder – mode) and you'll be beaten down even more frequently than before. But Ninja Gaiden has always

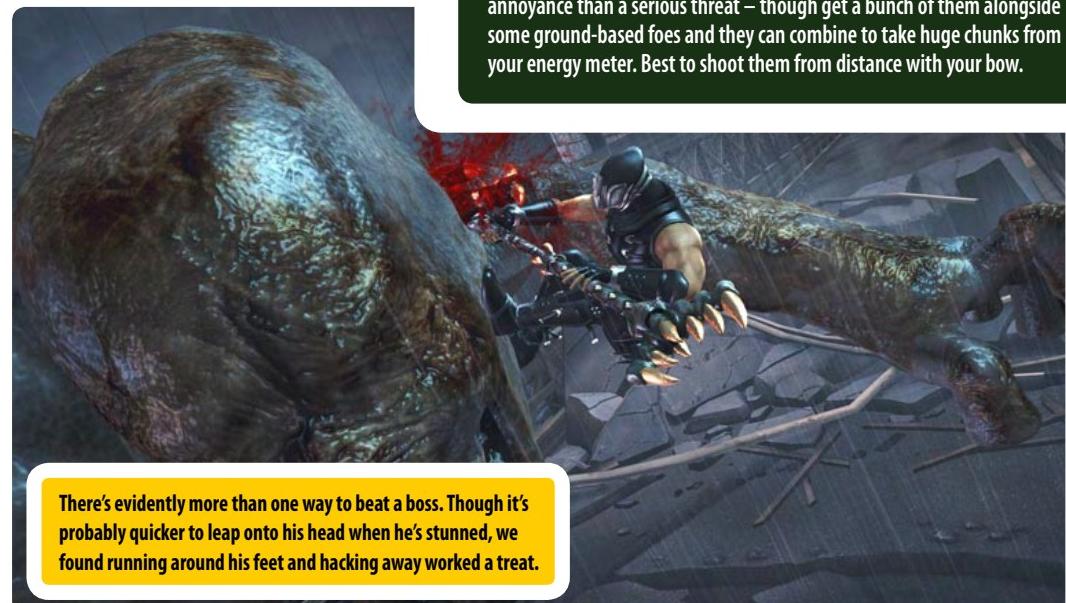
been punishing – it's practically the series' calling card. If you're coming to this expecting an easy ride, then you've certainly picked the wrong game. And while this sequel is, on occasion, gruelling, it's also more forgiving – placing its save points more sensibly than before, and allowing you to heal as you record your progress.

The second issue really is going to be divisive – even for those who adored the original. And that's the game's camera. We touched upon it briefly in our preview, but wondered whether things might change in the finished game. Not so. The camera in Ninja Gaiden II is, to put it mildly, a pain



in the arse. It's so awkward at times that you wonder if it's a deliberate design decision to increase the difficulty level. While in theory it allows you to freely look around, the only time you're going to be able to do that is when not engaging in combat – it's near-impossible to be hitting buttons to spark combo attacks while moving the right stick simultaneously.

Given how battle-heavy the first few chapters of the game are, you're not going to be moving the camera



There's evidently more than one way to beat a boss. Though it's probably quicker to leap onto his head when he's stunned, we found running around his feet and hacking away worked a treat.

WHO NEEDS ENEMIES? When you've got friends...



Frequent flyers

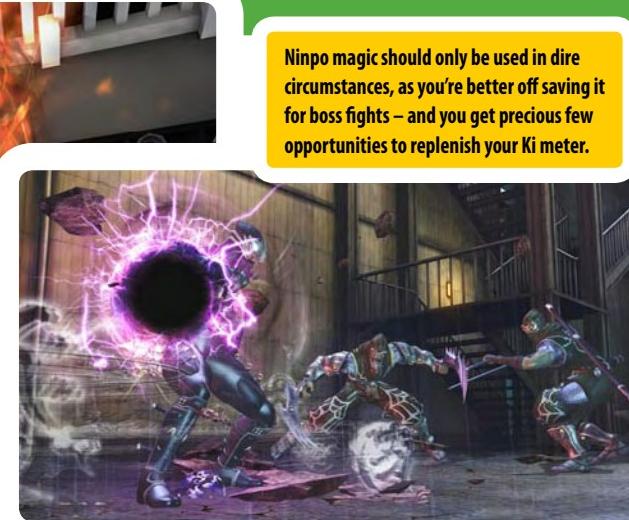
Hairy situation

Green is good

Frequent flyers

These winged demons, as well as being ugly buggers, are more of an annoyance than a serious threat – though get a bunch of them alongside some ground-based foes and they can combine to take huge chunks from your energy meter. Best to shoot them from distance with your bow.

Reviews



> Ninja Gaiden II continued

manually very often at all, and it's not as if you need to move it during quiet times anyway. Admittedly, the right trigger centres the camera behind Ryu, and once you master the use of this, things get easier. It's hardly the ideal solution – though undoubtedly the system will have its apologists – but you can just about work around it.

For the platforming sections however, it's a nightmare. While it frequently frames the action in a manner that can look cinematically impressive – particularly in battle,

where it makes the combat feel less repetitive – it so often points anywhere other than the direction you want it to face that you'll find Ryu is on the receiving end of several blows before he's even glimpsed who or what is attacking him.

While we're picking out flaws, the later levels are relatively uninspired compared to the earlier stages, throwing ever more demonic foes at you with comparatively few human opponents. It's not nearly as satisfying to slay these beasties as to destroy a

host of fast-moving ninja assailants, and many require so many hits before they drop that battles are as much a test of patience as they are of skill.

Still, given how long the chapters are (many last an hour or more), even if you give up before the end, you'll still more than get your money's worth out of Ninja Gaiden II. And while the above will frustrate a great many players, there are few games that give such frequent jolts of adrenaline as this. After slaughtering a group of giant enemies and surviving with just the barest sliver

of energy left, seeing that welcoming save point in front of you brings an incredibly overwhelming sense of relief and satisfaction. And when you're really on fire in battle, and Ryu is bouncing off walls, slashing enemies into pieces, spraying gore onto walls, floors, ceilings and his own weapons, it's like a ballet directed by Sam Peckinpah. It looks incredible – >

"When you're on fire in battle it's like a ballet directed by Sam Peckinpah"

FREEZE FRAME

Breaking the game down, one stage at a time...



30 MINUTES
Sky City Tokyo – a spectacular location to set events in motion and learn the ropes.



4 HOURS
The Big Apple is reduced to rubble as you fight huge demons and even bigger bosses.



9 HOURS
An arena full of wolves? Some of the game's set-pieces are truly awesome to behold.



14 HOURS
Right about now you'll be visiting Muramasa's shop to make your Falcon Talons longer and sharper.



20 HOURS+
Dare you try the tougher difficulties? At least you get your upgraded weapons back.



Reviews



It's healthy to keep a good mix of weapons for different situations – don't just level them all up equally.



It's quite a surprise when a boss you've fought and defeated suddenly reappears on the next level. Gaiden II constantly ratchets the difficulty up a notch.



Get hold of the incendiary shuriken and you can burn opponents to a crisp – ammo is fairly scarce, though.

"Gaiden's real triumph is how accessible it is"



A nice touch is how different the weapons can look after you've upgraded them. We're particularly fond of the fully-powered Lunar Staff.



Airborne moves are very deadly, so jump around as often as possible to both dodge incoming attacks and to set yourself up for some powerful combos.

PULSOMETER Signs of life

Exciting intro and thrilling opening stage

Tough bits and camera issues

Underworld areas aren't as interesting



New York in the rain
– very dramatic

Some brilliant boss fights

surprise factor of the original just about gives it the edge – at times, this will feel just a tad familiar to franchise veterans. Yet if this is the last in the series (as Itagaki has suggested) then it's going out on a glorious high. ●

> Ninja Gaiden II continued

blindingly fast, quite astonishingly fluid, yet still amazingly detailed – quite the technical achievement. Little wonder that creator Tomonobu Itagaki saw fit to include a Ninja Cinema option, allowing you to record and rewatch your finest moments – in glorious technicolour or Kurosawa-esque grainy black-and-white footage.

Though it seems strange to say it for such a difficult game, Gaiden's real triumph is how accessible it is – it doesn't rely on overly complex controls or require players to learn ridiculous strings of commands to pull off its best moves. Instead, it's all about reaction, timing, positioning, and simple single or dual-button presses to execute all of Ryu's ninja manoeuvres.

In other words, it's tough to master in the best possible way, and thus all the more gratifying when you do get the better of the onslaught of foes the game constantly throws at you. The

360Zine Verdict

An action-packed spectacular that's almost literally unbeatable.



Looks fantastic



Combat is deep and fulfilling



Bizarre camera and difficulty spikes

89%



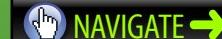
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Reviews

Xbox Live Arcade Round-Up

Another fantastic four available for download today...



Roogoo

Developer: SpiderMonk
Publisher: SouthPeak **Price:** 800 MP (~£6.80)

Don't let the cute and cuddly looks fool you, as we promise you that this is one of the most fiendish puzzle games that you'll currently find on the XBLA. There's a loose storyline pulling everything together here – some spurious tale about meteors and saving the planet, but all you need to know is you've got to guide these shaped blocks through the matching holes by

simply rotating the disk below to match. You'll pile up the various shapes until there are enough to force their way through each level, but believe us when we say this is a lot harder than it sounds. Still good fun though and one of the better games on there this month.

- Addictive
- Good music
- Too tricky in parts

Simple, but deadly

85%



Warlords

Developer: Stainless Games **Publisher:** Atari
Price: 400 MP (~£3.40)

We've been a bit harsh with these Atari games recently, but if the current rise in quality is anything to go by, these'll soon all be must buys. Warlords is a great example of how these ports should work. Taking an ancient arcade game, giving it a coat of graphical paint and adding more depth than the original, and Warlords is an instant smash four-player game. It works like a four-player pong – defend your 'castle' against enemy attack by moving a shield in front of the ball in time. With four players and multiple balls, this one gets pretty mad pretty quickly.



- Easy to play
- Like Pokémon Snap
- Dodgy rating system

Say cheese!

81%



Elements of Destruction

Developer: Frozen Codebase **Publisher:** THQ
Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

Ever wished you could control the weather? Well, in Elements of Destruction, that's exactly what you'll be doing. Playing as an outcast mad scientist, you'll wreak havoc on your former employers by converting yourself into a type of weather – whether it's a hurricane, earthquake or lightning. While we're a bit disappointed there's not a 'sunny day' option (hey, what could hurt your enemies worse than a bout of nasty sunburn?), what remains is a fun, if a bit limited destruct-a-thon.



- Blow stuff up
- Cause earthquakes
- Bit overly complex

Ride the lightning

84%

- Good in multiplayer
- Cheap!
- Great, classic gameplay

Engarde, Sir Merryweather!

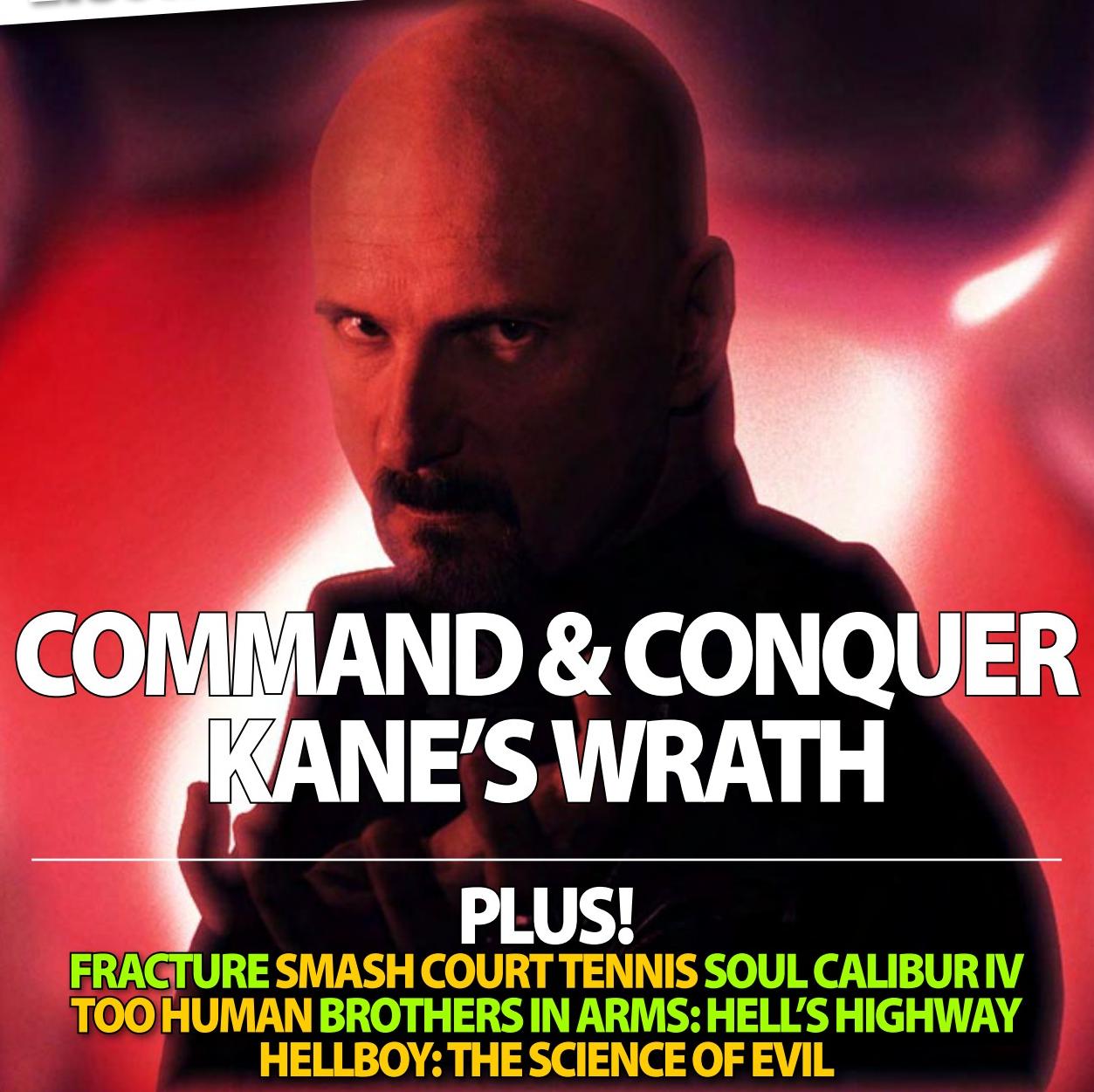
91%





Next Month

In 360Zine Issue 21



COMMAND & CONQUER KANE'S WRATH

PLUS!

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 Publishing Director: Dave Taylor
 Email: dave.taylor@cranberrypublishing.com
 Editorial Director: Dan Hutchinson
 Email: dan.hutchinson@cranberrypublishing.com
 Commercial Director: Duncan Ferguson
 Email: duncan.ferguson@cranberrypublishing.com
 Telephone: 0117 986 6550

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Contributors: Steve Hill, Chris Schilling, Ian Morris

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The screenshot shows the homepage of the N4G website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for "Read", "Related Games/Stories", and "Related Products". Below the navigation, a main headline reads "Gears of War 2's active sniper will not insta-down". The page features several news stories with thumbnail images and titles like "PS3 Update 2.40 Video Walkthrough Rel..." and "Ryan Payton Tells us why there is a X...". On the right side, there's a sidebar for "CranberryPub" with a "Submit" button and a "FREE DOMAIN NAME FOR NEW UK CUSTOMERS!" offer. The bottom of the page includes a "Site Features" section and a "Game Index" link.